

# Loch Katrine Declaration on fair water footprints for climate resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development

## A Glasgow COP26 Initiative, November 2021

*'Water is the driving force of all nature'.*

***Leonardo da Vinci***

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## I. Statement of Resolve

1. We, Ministers of countries which trade goods with significant embedded water, Heads of Companies, Financial Institutions, Civil Society Organisations and External Support Agencies meeting on the XXth November 2021:

2. Understanding that access to safe water and sanitation are basic human rights, and that the sustainable and equitable use, management and governance of freshwater is a fundamental requirement for the future of humanity and plays a central role in our effective response to the climate emergency.

3. Deeply concerned by the findings of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report<sup>i</sup>, the IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services<sup>ii</sup>, and the UN General Assembly's High-level Meeting on water-related goals of the 2030 Agenda<sup>iii</sup> that:

- Continued global warming is projected to further intensify the global water cycle, including its variability, global monsoon precipitation and the severity of wet and dry events.<sup>i</sup>
- Effects of climate change have increased the risks of disasters like droughts, floods, and sea level rise, as well as serious food insecurity and malnutrition primarily impacting children and the most vulnerable.<sup>i</sup>
- Human activity has caused natural freshwater and marine ecosystems to decline, with inland waters, wetlands and freshwater ecosystems showing the greatest and most rapidly accelerating rates of decline.<sup>ii</sup>
- Clean water and sanitation are the first line of defence for a successful COVID-19 response and recovery plans need to be resilient, green and inclusive.<sup>iii</sup>
- The current rate of progress towards water related goals and targets is severely off track and needs to quadruple if universal access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene is to be achieved.<sup>iii</sup>
- The financial gap to reach SDG 6 to 'Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030' will require a tripling of investment, or an additional US\$1.7 trillion, requiring a whole of society partnership between governments and diverse stakeholders, international co-operation, high-level political commitment, multistakeholder platforms and people centred solutions.<sup>iii</sup>

4. Recognising that the water footprint of consumer society, economic activity, and international trade binds us together through a shared responsibility and opportunity to ensure sustainable and equitable water use for the benefit of current and future generations.

5. Also recognising the priority to accelerate resilient economic and social development through transition towards sustainable and equitable water use, and away from unsustainable and inequitable water footprints whilst not constraining low-carbon growth and economic opportunity.

6. Further recognising the need for partnership to address our shared water and climate challenges through constructive engagement, technical and financial assistance, continual improvement, and mutual support which does not prejudice or cause harm, or divert attention or support away from the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

7. Convinced of:

- a. the urgent need for immediate action to curtail the harmful impacts of unsustainable water use and pollution arising from agricultural and industrial activity which exacerbate climate and disease vulnerability, and;
- b. the opportunity to harness globalised supply chains, and the reach and influence of the private sector, the financial sector, and civil society, to strengthen government efforts for sustainable and resilient water management.

8. **FORMALLY RESOLVE** to take far reaching and monitorable action which will have significant and durable benefits for communities, ecosystems, and economies, and which will accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 6, by ensuring that our water footprints are sustainable, resilient, and fair by 2030.

## II. Shared Commitments by All Constituencies

### Action for a Fair Water Footprint by 2030

9. We collectively commit to take all necessary steps to ensure that the water footprints which we have control over and influence upon, at home and abroad, will be sustainable, resilient, and fair by 2030, defined as business operations and supply chains within which there is credible and transparent evidence of:

- a. **Zero water pollution:** There will be no deleterious effect on the aquatic environment or adverse impacts on other water uses and functions arising from untreated wastewater or process discharges, diffuse pollution, contaminated run-off or spillages.
- b. **Sustainable withdrawal and equitable allocation of water:** Abstraction and use will take place within the hydrological limits of sustainability and will not compromise the human right to water, the needs and livelihoods of downstream communities and future generations.
- c. **Protection of nature:** Ecosystems and landscapes, and their services will be valued, protected, and sustainably managed, and nature-based and regenerative solutions will be prioritised.
- d. **Access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene:** All workers will have access to reliable and safe drinking water, toilets and washing facilities, and effective collective action will reach communities in need.
- e. **Resilience to drought, floods and water conflict:** Effective plans, policies, governance and investment will be in place to mitigate the risks of water related disasters and conflict, and legal compliance and water tenure for all users will be secured.

10. We reaffirm our commitment to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights unanimously endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011, Resolution 17/4, and

commit to operationalising its three pillars of: a state duty to protect, a corporate responsibility to respect, and access to effective remedy, particularly in relation the human rights to safe drinking water (UNGA Resolution 64/292) and sanitation (UNHRC resolution 15/9).

11. We will be guided by an overarching commitment to ensure that water use by economic activity within our water footprints should 'do no harm', and 'do good' by advancing delivery of the SDGs.

### **Participation, Inclusion, Transparency, and Accountability**

12. Underpinning this declaration and each of our commitments are the principles and practices of Participation, Inclusion, Transparency and Accountability, adherence to which will be tracked and reported as part of our subsequent actions.

### **Transformative Action**

13. To give full effect to the intentions of this Declaration, and to proceed with timely implementation we commit to:

- a. Develop and deliver an action plan and pathway to achieve the objective, which will include baselines, milestones and indicators of progress and impact.
- b. Meet annually to report and review progress, and to implement and abide by a mutual accountability mechanism.
- c. Mobilise adequate resources, capacity, and leadership to attain the objective by 2030.
- d. Transformative action which affects permanent and systemic beneficial change within society, involving comprehensive cultural, economic, and political paradigm shifts toward profoundly more sustainable, equitable and resilient behaviours and performance.
- e. Proactively advocate and use our influence to promote fair water footprints throughout the global economy by 2030 and recruit additional countries and stakeholders to join the global effort.

### **Scaling-up and Accelerating Water Stewardship**

14. We commit to establishing a fair water footprint as the business norm by scaling up and accelerating credible water stewardship at farms, factories and production sites, across supply chains, cities, catchments, company operations and investment portfolios, where water stewardship is defined as: *the use of water that is socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that includes both site- and catchment-based actions.*<sup>iv</sup>

## **III. Individual Commitments by Each Constituency**

15. Given the immediacy and scale of our shared water and climate challenges and the consequent need for complimentary and mutually re-enforcing activity by multiple actors

across a wide diversity of contexts, as members of each subsequently listed constituency, declare that to secure sustainable and fair water footprints by 2030, we will:

## 16. Government

*Commitments to be informed by stakeholder engagement*

## 17. Business

*Commitments to be informed by stakeholder engagement*

## 18. Financial Institutions

*Commitments to be informed by stakeholder engagement*

## 19. Civil Society Organisations

*Commitments to be informed by stakeholder engagement*

## 20. Research, Partnership Bodies and External Support Agencies

*Commitments to be informed by stakeholder engagement*

### **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Guiding questions:**

1. *Based on this draft, and subject to further deliberation on the detailed commitments expected of each stakeholder group, would you in principle be willing and able to sign the Declaration?*
2. *What do you find valuable or appealing about the Declaration?*
3. *What do you find most difficult, problematic, or challenging about the Declaration?*
4. *What or who is missing within the Declaration and its development process?*
5. *What commitments must your own stakeholder group make to secure sustainable and fair water footprints by 2030?*
6. *What commitments must other stakeholder groups make to secure sustainable and fair water footprints by 2030?*

#### Stakeholder groupings:

- **Government** – low and middle-income countries (World Bank definitions)
- **Government** – high-income countries (World Bank definitions)
- **Business and private sector**
- **Financial Institutions**

- **Civil Society Organisations** – representing communities, citizens, or primarily working for social and environmental justice
- **Research, Partnerships and External Support Agencies** – aid agencies/initiatives, think tanks, Universities, Partnership Initiatives, other

## **SUPPORTING MATERIALS – TO BE REFINED IN FINAL DECLARATION**

### **Appendix A. Definitions**

*Embedded water, and significant importers and exporters of....*

*Water Footprint*

*Participation, Inclusion, Accountability and Transparency – concept and practice*

### **Appendix B. List of Participating Countries and Organisations**

### **Appendix C. Indicators and Roadmap for Progress**

### **Appendix D. Agenda for Action**

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<sup>i</sup> IPCC, 2021: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, A. Pirani, S. L. Connors, C. Péan, S. Berger, N. Caud, Y. Chen, L. Goldfarb, M. I. Gomis, M. Huang, K. Leitzell, E. Lonnoy, J. B., R. Matthews, T. K. Maycock, T. Waterfield, O. Yelekçi, R. Yu and B. Zhou (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In Press.

<sup>ii</sup> IPBES (2019): Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 1148 pages. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.un.org/pga/75/wp-content/uploads/sites/100/2021/04/PGA-letter-summary-of-the-High-level-meeting-on-the-Implementation-of-the-Water-related-Goals-and-Targets-of-the-2030-Agenda.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> Alliance for Water Stewardship, 2019. International Water Stewardship Standard. <https://a4ws.org/the-aws-standard-2-0/>